



March 6, 2023

Dr. Dominic J. Mancini, Ph.D.
Deputy Administrator
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Dr. Mancini,

I am requesting emergency approval of a new information collection needed for implementation of the CHIPS Act of 2022 (Division A of P.L. 117-167) (the Act). The Act tasks the Secretary of Commerce with carrying out sections 9902, 9904 and 9906 of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (15 U.S.C. 4652, 4654, and 4656). This statute aims to catalyze long-term growth in the domestic semiconductor industry in support of U.S. economic resilience and national security. The NOFO discusses the application process for projects for the construction, expansion, or modernization of commercial facilities for the front- and back-end fabrication of leading-edge, current-generation and mature-node semiconductors and can provide direct funding (via grants, cooperative agreements, or other transactions), loans, and loan guarantees for eligible projects.

The CHIPS Program must fund a variety of projects to achieve its economic resilience and national security objectives. Projects will vary in technology, scale, cost, location, risk, and other factors. Over the last six months the Department has been working diligently to determine the best way to incentivize manufacturing through a series of requests for information. Input from these activities has helped design a program that will provide financial assistance awards to incentivize investment in facilities and equipment in the United States for semiconductor fabrication, assembly, testing, advanced packaging, and research and development, thereby increasing U.S. economic and national security by supporting a sustainable, competitive domestic semiconductor industry. Because both Congress and the Administration have identified the current low U.S. production of semiconductor chips as a matter of national security and defense, the Secretary of Commerce is implementing this program on an expedited timeline to meet the identified U.S. economic and national security needs.

The Department is requesting emergency approval of the CHIPS Environmental Questionnaire by March 20, 2023. The Environmental Questionnaire is required as part of the optional pre-application and the full application. The purpose of the Environmental Questionnaire is to ensure that the Department is aware, in broad terms, of relevant environmental considerations, and can work with the potential applicant to ensure that the applicant can provide all required environmental information during the full application and due diligence stages when applying for funding.

A Federal Register notice was published on March 3, 2023, for a public comment period which will end on March 17, 2023. Commerce understands OMB clearance would be for 6 months only and would publish a 60 day notice very quickly after OMB approves the emergency collection.

Please contact **Elizabeth.Reinhart@nist.gov** should you or your staff have any questions about this request.

Sincerely,

**LAURIE
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Laurie E. Locascio, Ph.D., NAE

Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology &
Director, National Institute of Standards and Technology

cc: Hon. Gina R. Raimondo